

HB 268 -- INMATE MEDICAL TREATMENT CHARGES

SPONSOR: Brattin

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 7 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 4.

This bill requires any inmate receiving an on-site non-emergency medical examination or treatment from the correctional facility's medical staff to be assessed 50 cents per visit. The bill provides specified guidelines the department must follow when authorizing and charging for medical treatment of an inmate.

This bill is similar to HB 1742 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that collecting a minimal copay from inmates seeking medical attention should help curb non-essential visits for medical services and bring some revenue to the state. Indigent inmates will not be turned away, so, if medical treatment is necessary, inmates will still receive it. This is meant to weed out people who take advantage of the system. Ohio implemented this recently and it has saved the state \$26 million per year in medical costs. The federal court ruled the charging of a copay to be constitutional, as the facilities are not allowed to deny care if inmates cannot afford the copay.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Brattin.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say there are some concerns about the implementation and logistics of the copay program.

Testifying on the bill was Department Of Corrections.